

# SONGS OF THE STARS

RIEMAN BAXLEY

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# Songs of the Stars

By

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"The Temple of Alanthur," "The Prophet,"  
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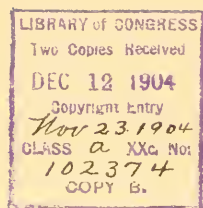


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## DEDICATION

---

To whom?

To those who dwell among the Stars, and  
gaze

Steadfast at us, as into summer nights,  
We bring our lamp of glory, and always  
Stand there quiescent in the summer's  
lights—

To them.





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# SONGS OF THE STARS

---

## THE STAR

---

Because my seas are wide, and I  
Whirl through a Planet-painted sky,  
Because I dare to come and go  
Through endlessness, and overflow  
Of passion's still unfigured glow;  
Because the eyes of men shall be  
But where I take them carefully,  
The fate of men be fixed, and cast  
Wherever path of mine is passed,  
All-helpless tenants of my day  
Fade as my figure shrinks away;  
Because I dance, and swim, and be  
What all men cling to passionately—  
Upbraiding in their jealousy;  
Because I bind them in my keep,  
And hear them wail, and see them weep,  
And still with heartless vigor run  
My race immortal with the Sun,  
What challenger shall rise and say  
The Earth is fretful on her way?

I laugh when comes the little cry  
Of trouble-mad mortality:  
What! shall I bear thee, and invest  
My body for thy joy and zest;  
My beauty braid, and lips declare  
For thee the lullabies of air;  
My potions mix, for thee distil  
Elixirs the starred spaces fill;  
Shall I with tireless footsteps turn  
Round the vast plains where planets burn,  
Draw past the brilliant gazing globes  
Of intense Suns my clouds and robes;  
Sustain thee when the unknown gales  
Drive into Heavenly climes and vales—  
Shall I do this, and then dare be  
Rebellious to my Sovereignty?

Go then; forsake my wayward will;  
If thou'rt a conqueror, go—fulfil  
In some far Planet's starry eyes  
The madness of thy destinies.

THE EARTH-SONG

---

Led out on the ripples of laughter and light  
I am Bride of the Heavens, and my Lord  
is the Sun;

O tell me not other ones shine in his sight,  
I know that his passion possesses but one.  
I know that he burns, that his eyes are consumed

With a longing for me, that the tale of  
his days  
Is warmed with the breath of his lips, that  
perfumed  
Flies out to my bosom, is gathered and  
stays.

I know that his passion, through plentiful  
years,  
Did beset me, I know that the storm of his  
heart  
Was hot in the flames of his failures and fears  
To break through the distance, and draw  
me apart.

O Lord of my longing, at last in my eyes  
Is the purple of passion; O Star of the Day

Forever I blush when the wind of surprise  
Drives the curtain of darkness that cloaks  
thee away.

Forever the lilies and roses arise  
Where the touch of thy tenderness pressed  
me and passed,  
Forever the face of the Earth justifies  
The caress of caresses on her heart was the  
last.

No Planet I fear, for I braid in my hair  
Their delicate lusters, and gleam in the  
gems  
Of an infinite Heaven as one who walked  
there  
With garments that gathered the Stars to  
their hems.

And the Lord of my conquest is leading  
me on,  
Through the depths of the midnight and  
azure of day,  
Far out where the footsteps of other Stars  
run,  
And the flash of their circlings breaks out  
into play.

Where the Sisters of Heaven revolve in their  
twains,  
And the dials of Heaven point over the true  
Unchangeable grace where the Planets in  
plains  
Superbly shine out for their consorts to  
view.

There I go, and never my Sovereign denies,  
Inconstant, his presence, as planting his  
feet  
Serenely on paths of his far-reaching eyes,  
He watches the globes where they glitter  
and meet.

The gales of the ether blow out of their home,  
Delightful we float into space and away,  
O Lord of my loving, where thou callest I  
come,  
What bond hath the Earth could encom-  
pass her stay!

THE COUNTRY OF THE STAR

---

And still my dwellers find me sweet,  
Still follow where my fearless feet  
Find footfall into vacant ways  
That my bright presence first betrays.  
Through the new fields of days to be  
I float in azure subtlety,  
And, with the instincts of a maid,  
Through Heaven I find the placid shade,  
Hiding a face delight makes fair,  
And plunge to cool its gladness there.  
The words of many a distant sphere  
Drift into time, and catch my ear,  
And many a Sister signals me  
With gesture of exposed beauty  
Across the light of many a Sea.  
The maids of Heaven have many a phase  
Of radiance in their sparkling ways,  
And many a Song of subtle shade  
Is in the Heavenly meadows played.  
In globes of various splendor runs  
Th' unequal ardor of the Suns;  
Resplendent in the morning air  
Flings o'er the Stars its brilliant glare  
The face of him who wakes to dare.



I on that glittering ancestry  
Gaze as a Goddess equally;  
No matter what delightful air  
Fanned from the glades of anywhere,—  
Blown from its lair of loveliness,  
Witching the keep of lost duress,—  
Flows in mysterious breezes where  
Some figure trails her wondrous hair;  
No matter how the Stars entwine  
Tiaras where their signets shine,  
And circle other names than mine,  
Nor if the Lord of some lost way  
Should blaze with sudden ecstasy,  
And dash the ardor of his eyes  
Where some slow watcher waiting flies;  
Nor matter if a thousand dyes  
Mix where the light impassioned lies  
Upon some Planet splendidly—  
Still is this Heaven a home for me!  
O what resistless sense to be  
Swung like a signal out at sea,  
No dread of wave, nor gloom, nor gale,  
Nor know no tumult to assail  
Angelic wings that safely cleave  
Whatever winds they find and leave.  
Whatever course of marvelous Sun

Down the swift glades of Time be run,  
Whatever answering image lies  
When conquest turns his burning eyes,  
What shape, what fragment, what decree  
Breaks from that cloud Eternity,  
All is of them, and all of me.  
I am no Star to wander on  
Undone, dissevered, and alone;  
Far on the fringe of all I see  
Arranged in startling panoply,  
Far in the realms where grandeur earns  
Wages of excellence, and burns  
Perfervid in the glowing urns;—  
For where the depths of many dyes  
Flash into their intricacies,  
And far wherever newness be  
Is still the flame that floats with me.  
My heart is as a beacon lit,  
And I, impassioned, look from it;  
I love the Heavens and starry eyes  
That fathom many mysteries;  
I love the Seas, where changing swim  
Shadows of floating seraphim,  
The keen, delicious words they sing  
Thrill through myself and everything.  
Remember that we Worlds of bliss

Have most exquisite consciousness;  
Children of pain keep many sighs  
Surrounding where their trouble lies;  
Mortals that hovering come and go  
Over my heart in ceaseless flow—  
Forever with low-looking eyes—  
Keep not our splendid sympathies.  
But I, I yearn for every Star  
In all the Worlds that were and are.  
Where are the dazzling Worlds that swim  
With beauty bubbling to the brim?  
Where the translucent Globes that fly  
Through airs that are a rhapsody,  
And clouds that can not sink and die?  
Where are the Seas that flash and foam  
On confines of resplendent home  
And, vanquished, beautiful become?  
Where are the Suns suddenly rise  
Bent on perfect subtleties  
And heat of every new emprise?  
Wherever they, my heart aware  
Of all that makes their purpose fair  
Throbs with forever gazing there!

Like a sweet Island, swung astream,  
I float in Heaven, where pass and gleam

Currents and cargoes constantly,  
Swept in the winds of melody.  
When in the lull of things I rest,  
Curtained and couched, a favored guest,  
And midnight-stars light up the dream  
That lies in shadow out between  
Th' exquisite things that are, and seem,  
O then the passion and delight  
Of a pure Planet in the sight  
Of Stars whose very number makes  
A melody, and Time that takes  
Mysterious look of Infinite—  
O then the fate of Earth is fair,  
And cool the clouds that keep her there!

FAREWELL OF THE EARTH  
TO HER SONS

---

Toll slow—toll slow—  
O let the chimes go  
Far out from my heart with solemn flow,  
For the days of the Star  
Do vanish, and are  
Where slumber and silence their darkness  
bestow.  
For the bells of the Heavens are hanging in  
spheres  
That toll to the temper of sorrow and tears,  
For the Stars of the Heavens are misty with  
pain  
That the light of the Earth lies low in the  
wane,  
And the Watchers of Heaven, who heard as  
they passed  
Call her name where forever they found her  
at last.  
On they fly through the infinite shadows in  
vain,  
For the face of the Earth is forgotten again—  
And the Legend of Earth sleeps sound with  
the slain.

Toll low—toll low—  
O let the light go  
With lingering looks on my face and slow,  
For the colors that fade  
From my visage were made  
Where the beautiful things of the past over-  
flow.

O the days that the Earth in her gladness  
sped by  
Where the pathways of Heaven are fast in  
the sky,  
And the nights when the Earth went aslum-  
bering soon  
Because of the fancies that fell from the  
Moon,  
And the dusk of her changing, the dusk and  
delay  
When the Songs of the Sunset swept out with  
the day,  
And the voices of evening in tremor became  
The heralds to tell all the Stars of her name,  
O the conquest of Earth, O what charm had  
decay  
To steal all the strength of her pleasures  
away.

But swing the chimes low,  
And let the words go  
With the slant of the bells that are heavy  
and slow,  
For the bursts of my sighs  
Where these sorrows arise  
Shake the symbols of sadness that tremble  
to know.

There were voices of many that girdled in  
pride  
All the zones of the earth; lo the Singers all  
died;  
Lo the quest of the happy, and the things of  
the gay  
Dropped out into darkness and echoed away;  
They have gone; whither went all the change-  
able throng  
That once claimed the Earth with their con-  
quest and song,  
Did they take not the secret to me did belong?  
  
Did they lean on my bosom, luxurious guest,  
And steal out the perfume exhaled from my  
breast?  
Did they breathe out their love with a tumult  
of sighs

That fell with the darkness of rain from my  
eyes?

While I slept did they dally, and vanquish the  
morn,

Have they fled with my favor, and laugh they  
in scorn—

Is the Earth all alone—do the Stars never  
mourn?

Ring low—ring low—

O let the tones go

Out into the ether with musical flow,

For I perish, but still

Chance melody will

Break over the Heavens to let the Stars know.



THE POETS PRAISING EARTH

---

My Poets people Isles of Sea,  
And walk the shores, and sing to me;  
They watch the waters, where the haze  
Falls out from Heaven, and floating stays,  
And, with ecstatic fears that he  
Should be the Singer loved of me,  
Each strikes the chords he keenest plays.  
They chant, and I, begemmed with Song,  
Bear the blue Islands lightly on,  
I smooth the Sea, and bring its end  
Gently to them, whose songs extend,  
And space floats on, and, like a flower  
Dew-hung with passion's passing hour,  
I quiver with suppressed delight,  
Stirred by the winds that choose the Night,  
And, Music making time in me,  
I brush the dewdrops in the Sea,  
Too happy rise, calling the Day,  
And Songs and Singers drift away!

THE SINGER

---

So, from my caverns in the air  
I watched him when he stopped and sang;  
I grasped the clouds and held them there,  
And stole the music while it rang.

If some wild Star a tremor made  
I stirred the clouds and hid the spark,  
While the swift music stronger played  
I shut the Heavens, and kept them dark.

What need have I of Singer sweet,  
My ears are dead to pipes and song,  
My wish is where the distant meet,  
And vast the shades where I belong.

Do I stretch on the clouds and dream,  
Tossed in the tumult of the air,  
To hear the sound of some small theme  
Strike on the apparitions there?

I turned the shadow of my eyes  
And made the atmosphere a gloom,  
I spread my robes on broken skies,  
And swept them to their midnight home.

I lashed the feeble Moon away  
And scorned her crescent flickering,  
I choked the Wind-words with dismay  
And asked my Singer then to sing.

And when his lips, with sorrow bent,  
Dropped somber singing, plaintively,  
From out the rhythm as it went,  
I, following, snatched the melody.

I stole the beauty, and the pain  
Rang in its shapeless manner on;  
I drew the dye and left the stain  
To stamp the making of his Song.

Then stood he still: his singing sank  
To senseless words, said heavily,  
Still with the thirst of rage I drank  
The last drop of its harmony.

And still I tossed the music back  
Behind me, to some summer Isles,  
But him I harassed in the black  
Shadows I laid in long defiles.

O it was joy to see him stand;  
I have a thousand men to lead,

I stormed the Heavens from land to land  
For him, and whirled the winds with speed.

With wraiths of wrath I filled the dome  
Of all my vault, Immensity,  
I shut the lights about my home,  
And smote the Singer angrily.

I drove the Winds that wait for me  
Round their fierce course to gather in  
Old echoes I had kept to be  
Sounds of the Songs he did begin.

With scorn I scattered them below,  
They fell incessant, like the rain  
Of some fresh weeping, and did grow,  
Watered by them, the sights of pain.

I left him; for myself repose  
Drew from the Stars he could not see:  
I slept in Heaven, and when arose  
The Sun, misled him craftily.

I drew the glittering Orb away  
And rolled him down on pleasant plain,  
Content was at the bridle way,  
And beauty drove the treacherous twain.

I gave the Sun delight and ease,  
And he, the wily Monarch, smiled  
And slack'd the pace, and took the peace,  
And looked not for his lands exiled.

But I to savage brooding turned,  
And laid my hands on heavy knees  
Till the low clouds with rancor churned  
Distempered through the dripping trees.

There is a terror of the air,  
A darkness of the very Orb,  
There is a time when touch is where  
It feels a frightened silence throb.

And he was there: I poured the dye  
Of terrible temper on the world,  
And tore the vestiges of sky  
From the scared patches where they  
whirled.

And sat me down, nearly content;  
These were the things I chose to give;  
Hark! little sound that shivering went  
Away, wast thou the last to leave?

SONG OF THE POET

---

Was ever my Soul on the swell of the ether?  
And did it descend in the circle of Mars?  
O why on my lips are the Songs of a believer,  
And why through my brain is the dance  
of the Stars?

Was it I, of a sudden, from somewhere descended,  
Who fell, as a Planet unceasingly swings,  
And flies with her magical motion extended,  
And clings with her feet to the quivering  
strings?

Ah! never! the music was played or was  
spoken;  
Went into the drift of the ether, and there  
Lies out on the edges of Heaven all broken,  
And lies on my lips but the earth—and despair!

But the magnets of Heaven, ever busy in  
winding  
All the jewels of Heaven in glitter and  
play,

Are they still? O why will they never be  
finding  
The flash of the Earth-Star and bear it  
away?

Away and away with the wings of the mid-  
night,  
That carry the Stars when their musical  
rounds  
Flash into the keys, and pull them in delight  
Out over the ether in exquisite sounds.

For the world is fast, and it swings and swings  
And seeks for the sensitive, quivering  
strings—  
And almost stops till the melody rings.

Be still! I am a Poet mad;  
With tongue of torment, and a name  
Struck from the World it should have had,  
And doubt, and wretchedness, and flame  
Of hatred for the things that give  
Delight to people where I live.  
With heart of Song, and lips that bleed  
Because they tear the terrible weed  
Of rottenness, and bitter, sad  
Are all the sounds I ever had.

Why can I never stop and tear  
The thing within that's always there  
And hurl it out into the air?  
If with a savage World I stood  
Once in a savage solitude;  
Once never heard within my heart  
Mysterious music plays its part;  
Knew that I was a crime within,  
And heard my lips their tales begin;  
O if I could look out and see  
The World in storm, and then in me  
Heard the same sound of misery—  
If once the lyre snapped in my heart,  
O could my lips then learn their part?  
I hate to be something within  
That is as gentle as a Star  
Dipped where the sea and air begin,  
That will not move from where they are,  
That keeps by Heaven and keeps by land—  
And is what Angels understand—  
And then with level lips that close  
Determined over all that flows  
From some imagined World to me,  
Stand in a vexed World sullenly—  
And vex it still with obstinacy.



I am a Poet mad, with tongue  
That knows the speech of Heaven, and smote  
Last night in Heaven, as Angels sung  
The secrets of my lips, and wrote  
Words on the echoes of their air,  
And was, O bliss, a Poet there!

It was the sounds of slumbering,  
This is the World, I can not sing:  
There's nothing overhead, the Sky  
Gleams with a rancorous subtlety;  
There's not a Star dares gird its dance,  
No Planet springs her bold entrance,  
Shame on their faces! they refuse!  
Could Beauty ever give excuse?  
Ah! Wind and Cloud, I know where none,  
Not even you, will dare to come,  
A gulf that lies stretched openly—  
Refusing nothing—O the Sea!  
My heart sinks with its sounds in thee!

But the World floats on, and swings and  
    swings,  
And waits for the silver sound of the strings—  
And my Heart holds tight, and to it clings.

\* \* \* \* \*

I wept, and the soft rain of tears  
Washed through the darkness at my feet,  
And he, the passionate Singer, hears  
My heart-throbs in their hurried beat.

Slowly the burdened clouds I break  
In pieces, and, with pallid face,  
One after one of the Stars I take  
And burnish in its glittering place.

---

### THE DREAM

---

It may be that the things that live  
By some exceeding subtle Star  
Swept to the Planet where I stayed,  
And drew me, with words they made  
Over a new unfinished bar,  
Out to their homes, where Music hung  
In air—and down the Stars distinctly rung.

Or was it that a Spirit dyed  
The mists of morn, and overlaid  
The edge of Earth, and rolled the tide  
For once as other Worlds were made?  
And broke the sequence of the Sea,

And jarred the air with mystic time,  
And while it scattering came, he played  
The Songs of Stars and gave them me ?

Stars where the cloud-heaps float in foam  
Of some peculiar light that will  
But scintillate, and keep its own  
Expression and its movement still;  
Where clouds love music, and exist  
Stretched sensitive upon the air,  
And things no Song of ours would dare  
From out the lips of Singers flow,  
And float in Heaven, and from them go—  
O tell me, was it into these  
Extremely furnished harmonies

I strayed,  
And listened while the music played—  
Or even did I hear it here  
Sound in the Earth's real atmosphere?

I know that Singers stretch their strings  
In dews of morn, and from the night  
Splash out their liquid murmurings,  
And dip their fingers in delight  
Through the cool things of Earth, and fling,  
There in the coming of the Day,  
What words he loves and bears away.

I know that ears are ever tuned  
To catch the sonnets of the Sun,  
And lips are begging nights that mooned  
Full-figured, waver in replies  
Fantastic things to following eyes—  
And he who sings exactly these  
Is Poet—with his mysteries.

What care I though the Gates of Day,  
Swift moving with their golden bars  
Thrown wide on roads that bear way  
The Night, and Moon and thousand Stars—  
And there reflecting in the Sun  
Stand opening wide to every one—  
Should never pass me, and I lay  
Shut in by night, and dawn, and day.  
What care I if the Sentinel  
Should never know me, as, aflame  
With touches of the hastening Stars,  
And flying skirt of desperate Moon,  
He draws too close the Day and soon;  
Nor care I though his glorious eyes,  
Forever glittering in pursuit  
Of him who trails the dew-damp foot,  
Should sweep me with their vivid stare,  
And find me strange, and leave me there.

If I must harken as they go,  
The things that make me love them so,  
And watch them, when their fluttering hands  
Make signet of the signs they know  
To pass him where he nodding stands,  
The strange old Ward of Earth and Lands;—  
If I must catch the words of tune  
The Stars sing in the ring of Moon,  
To charm him as they drift away  
The thousandth time in face of Day,  
And with no trace themselves, betray;—  
The thousandth time if I must say  
Whatever words they're answering,  
Words of the kind he seems to know,  
To please him ere he let me go—  
Forgive him that did keep me so—  
And smite the lips he says shall flow,—  
Then through the shadows of the deep  
Sweep on, ye Stars, and let me keep  
Unhappy watch through Gates of Day  
While ye, ye Wanderers, steal away.

Sometime some Maid of Heavenly race,  
Too eager for the purple deep,  
With laugh of parting, and a pace  
That speeds with print of fluttering feet

The edge of Morn, shall delicate  
Entangle with the speech she gives  
A word of Heaven, and I by fate  
Shall catch the country where she lives.  
And then, because I find out where

A path is in the Clouds, and when  
Delight is summering through the air  
With Stars that hide themselves, and then,  
Far from the fretful eyes of Day,  
Disrobe and in the darkness play,—  
Ah! then, perhaps if I should be  
Chanced with th' impulsive company  
That press the gates and throng the ways  
Again where the old Warder stays,  
And looks and wonders while the Sun  
Keeps panting with the path he's on,  
Ah! then, perchance because my lips  
Have really breathed the midnight sky,  
And touched the faintest cloud that tips  
The fluttering Moon as she goes by,  
It might be that delight would make  
My memory willing, and I say  
The common words he loves to take  
When out he swings the Gates of Day.

Keep on, ye Singers, who divide  
The quarters of the Earth, and string  
Content your chords, and play beside  
The ways the World is wandering,  
Shall I be with you, or away  
Risk in the shapes of Sky and Cloud  
The strangeness of my Songs, and stay  
Far from the courts where listeners crowd  
In circles where the Poets play?  
None answer: and I can not hear,  
When with a desperate, struggling wing  
I fan my Songs, and they appear  
Lost in the mighty murmuring  
That clouds the roads from Star to Star—  
Can only see them fade, and far  
Toss through the depths where terrors are.

It is my secret, and—afraid  
To settle when your wings of peace  
Rest where the Earth has shores of ease,  
And where the Pipes of Songs have played  
So long the very Seas are said  
To sing the sands into a tune—  
I shall, with shadow of the Moon,  
And swift-winged Stars in fiery bands,

Vanish from where he always stands—  
That strange old Ward of Earth and Lands—  
Clamoring for words he understands.

---

### THE DREAMERS

---

My love, why should we test the Earth?  
Why Folly bind us, and we cling  
Atempering on the edge of Mirth?  
Thou are not kind in answering.

Why not? The Stars are very near,  
And we so lightly stationed wait,  
Come, shall we venture? Is it fear,  
Or loving, keeps thee hesitate?

It is not I exacts delay,  
And thou, 'tis marvelous to me  
Feeling thy form in the Earth-winds sway,  
For the dead Earth is strange to thee.

There are no airs around us near,  
Hist thee, my Love, lo everything  
Falls from the Stars, and faintly here  
Drops from the Stars their questioning.



Lo, all the gentle things have gone,  
The flutes have flown, ah! why not we?  
The Poets sang, and, one by one,  
Paced from the groves of Arcady.

Look in their dead aisles through the breeze,  
There's echo only, and decay  
Stirs all the stoppage of the trees  
To blot the feet that went away.

See! 'tis the treachery of the Sun  
To steal his touches on the eyes  
Of stark dead marbles, and to run  
His fingers through infirmities.

Ah! when he's finished with the face  
Of Beauty, see how cold she lies,  
Her wet cheek moulded into place,  
That Earth should show her agonies.

And still thou'rt constant? Here I chide  
And all th' unhappy signets show,  
And yon the Stars arise and glide  
In safety, and in pleasure glow.

Yon are the Stars, and they go thronging,  
And we are here, with feet astill,

And watch them pass, and they go longing,  
And their old paths they upward fill.

'Tis I—my fault—myself alone—  
So little, and dispassionate;  
My Song is only undertone,  
Thou wantest—I, unable, wait.

Can I not change thee? Never yield  
Thee music that will move thy feet?  
And never take thee where the field  
Of midnight will the music meet?

Come Love: the winds of ancient nights  
Strike on the Earth, and rise, and flow  
Mixed with still ancients' delights  
That struggle from their memory slow.

Like an intense, mysterious air  
That startles, and becalms again,  
The households of the Planets there  
Open their doors, and close, and then—

We look and listen in the dark,  
And they, invisibly within,  
Stand in their homes, and but the spark  
Of answer glows where they had been.

And so they cherish, and deceive,  
And do forget when we would know;  
And yet, O Love, before they leave,  
This is the air with them will go.

They spread their hands, and move and stay,  
Finding the steps that thread the clouds;  
They stop, and vanish, and delay,  
And stand intent in splendid crowds.

See how their burdened figures climb,  
Slowly with waiting, overhead,  
And then, like words that catch the rhyme,  
Rush out, in faster music led.

We can not keep them: still they come,  
Refreshed from some unknown descent,  
And pale with longing far from home,  
And dazzled when they homewards went.

There is the movement of their gait,  
See, shall we hasten and entwine  
Our garments round the Winds that wait  
Impatient where the Stars decline?

Lo, every ripple of the Sea  
Runs o'er the brink, and goes away,

Slips from its sleepless bed, and we,  
Also awake, gaze on, and stay.

Look! Every name of Passion's there,  
And every glory that the Sun  
Saw done in any summer air  
Died out the road the Stars are on!

And we remain: and still the Day  
Unseals his record from the Night,  
And scatters, like an heir, away  
His testament the Stars did write:—

And all the riches hoarded by  
Dishonored fade, and he, the Sun,  
Reels up a flaring edge of sky  
And we—O Love, we've gone! we've gone!

THE DREAM SONG

---

At last, at last,  
With wing in the wind,  
And wind in the depths of Heaven,  
And face in the flash of the Stars as they  
passed,  
And eyes where the Stars are Seven;  
At last where the Moon, with its silver sphere,  
Swings swift round the Earth, and flies so near  
I laugh lest the men in the World should see  
The cold white Globe come threateningly.

At last on the edge of the purple dark  
The whirl of my wings is free,  
And I chase at my will a great white spark  
That always appeared to me  
Like a flame cast into the Sky, and kept  
By something invisibly:  
Fast, fast through the lights, and the shadows  
and rain  
Of the Star-drops that disappear out in the  
plain  
I vanish, and faster forever I gain.

My love and myself at last in the Sky  
And its passionate sights of intensity;  
For I pant and I palpitate thinking of when  
    I stood on the Earth and looked up at the  
        Sky,  
And sighed for the beautiful Stars, that were  
    then  
    Dissevered and far in their mystery:  
O the trouble, and passion, and tears of the  
    Day  
That spotted the Earth, in its dust of decay,  
That fiercely drank down of my sorrows  
    always:  
But I live by the Stars, and they flame and  
    they fade  
Wherever my quest of desire is made,  
And never, since them, am I lost or afraid.  
But the Love of the Stars! O the atmosphere  
    They kept from the Earth, and concealed  
        in the Sky!  
When I loved on the Earth, my love was dear,  
    And the kiss of the Earth was an alchemy;  
But the Stars, O the luminous Stars are where  
Love's never afraid, for his vesture there  
Will the lips never weave what the heart will  
    not wear.

DANCING STARS

---

I know not where, I know not where  
The Earth is round, and still  
The Stars will love the midnight air,  
And sparkling dance their fill;  
I know not where they glide away,  
Nor how they pass the Sea,  
And come again when tired Day  
Asks for their melody.

I know not how their sweet embrace  
Is constant, and how true  
Each sees at morn the lovely face  
At eve each lover knew;  
I know not how they whirl and float  
So surely through the Sky,  
And never lose a moment's note  
In all the minstrelsy.

I can not tell, and know not whose  
Eyes are enchanted there,  
Nor how the magic maidens choose  
Their steps into the air;  
I only know that weary lies

The daring of the Sun,  
Who murmurs while the wave replies—  
And still the Stars dance on!

---

## SONG OF THE ISLANDS IN THE SEA

---

Shine on, you Stars, but know that we  
Are still the Islands in the Sea;  
We know you while you rise and bound  
From the dead underworld, and round  
Swift Heaven whirl on impatiently,  
Searching the Seas and shores where we  
Appearing keep serenity.  
We are the Islands of the Sea  
To sing you still forever home  
When you revisit us, and come  
From out the dreadful underdome  
With shadows on your slumbering eyes,  
And open them into our skies.  
Here we await on conquered Seas,  
Stretched under clouds that float like these,  
And here in quiet caverns shine  
Our faces, and those eyes of thine.



Deep where the land lies under Sea  
The eyes of love pierce ardently:  
Who were the lovers would not meet  
In thoughts that tangle up the feet?  
And whose the lip tastes not the rose  
On lips, that from the bosom grows?

We are the Islands of the Sea,  
And sound the World with melody:  
Why is it that there always stand  
Listening ashore along the land  
Poets, who strive to catch the glee  
That breaks adrift from Isles of Sea.  
We are the Queens of Song, who keep  
Courts on the circuits of the deep,  
And if our Songs should ever be  
Sung harsh, we send them over Sea,  
There, rippling scattered o'er the wave,  
They sweeter come than when we gave.

The old, deep Sea draws down the weight  
Of sadness, and on palpitate  
The rhythms of our unknown air  
To land, and find the listeners there.

As the swift Stars within the tide  
Of Heaven astream, we Islands glide

Voluptuous leagues of rounded Seas  
Caressed when Love can keenest please:  
When Dawn is young, and shyly breaks  
We lie await till rose-lip takes,  
And when adark the water steals  
The Sea-Isle thrills and conquest feels:  
O wind and blossom, Sun and smile,  
You reach us first on far-hung Isle,  
And still whatever Music strays  
Away, the sweetest ever stays.

Why is it that the palms decline  
Softer a-sea than shore, are thine?  
Why is it that the fervid deep  
Refused our blossoming selves to keep,  
And, burst on struggles of the tide,  
We rose to Heaven, and lightly ride?  
Kept on the compass of the Sea  
We never know monotony,  
For cloud and Sun, and hungered breeze  
Blow ever through our floating trees,  
And ever, thirsting deep the taste  
Of flowers, for us the Sea-winds haste.

We are the Islands of the Sun,  
The sweetest ever dreamed upon;

For Seas can dream, and lying there  
With all the midnight on the air,  
With all the Stars so very still,  
And all the clouds at rest, until  
There's nothing that could hear a Song—  
The waves in slumbering slip along.  
We are the Isles where color stays,  
And where the burnished stroke of days  
Rings on the gilded globe of Sun  
The echo of his numbers done:  
We are the Isles where sonnets gleam  
Down in the darkness of the stream,  
And while the Stars enchanted sing  
Sonnets flash up in answering.

O Islands in the Purple Sea

    Fear not to drift on any shore,  
Nor ever fear exquisitely

    Thy Songs shall fade, and sound no more:  
Where would the eager lips of Day

    Ope in the morn, and where would rhyme  
Beat its delicious roundelay

    By any shores, if not on thine?

Where would the tired Stars alight

    From the vast plains they're flying through,  
And, weary-winged, rest when the Night

Slips out beyond themselves and you?  
Couch of the Moon, and dream of Star,  
O Isles where all the World can rest,  
And all that journey by you are  
With secret of your parting blest.

Ye are but magnets in the air  
Polished by glory of the Sun,  
Swung o'er the Seas, ye islands fair,  
To draw the eyes the Seas upon:  
To tempt the heart of all the shore  
Out into your uncertain tide,  
And lead all love that went before  
Still on, and gather more beside.

We are the Isles where Music lies  
Almost unstrung, so very low  
Languish impulsive harmonies  
Into the faintest sounds they know:  
Where something keeps the strings apart,  
And all the passion playing there  
Is timid, that the very heart  
Of Love lies beating on the air!

We are the Isles—not very far—  
Look on our bosoms bared for thee,  
Come, see our willing footsteps are

Imprinted pleading in the Sea;  
We watch the clouds that keep the shore,  
And sing the little sails afloat,  
And believing draw the shallops o'er  
Incessant, with our silvery note.

Shine on, ye Stars, but always know  
Sea-Isles are waiting here below;  
Ye ply the paths of Heaven, and we  
Hold something shining in the Sea,  
In Heaven whenever you shall pass  
We keep your journey in the glass,  
Leagues of the Sea you come and go,  
And all your wanderings will we know.

With arms entwined from shore to shore  
We glide, and singularly pour  
Mysterious passion of our Song  
On Souls that unto us belong;  
We signal, piercing to the eyes,  
And eagerly the helmsman plies  
His circles that shall sweep him near,  
And traffics swiftly over here.

Lost to the land, forever gone,  
Never returned is anyone;  
And if their eyes shall ever be

With Stars reflecting in the Sea—  
And if their eyes shall ever gaze  
In Heaven, where still the starlight plays—  
And if their eyes should then forget,  
And vanish unforgotten, yet  
Still on their lips would lingering be  
The Songs they heard in Isles of Sea.

We are the Isles of Sea, and twine  
Our passion into words divine—  
And still the Stars look on and shine.

---

## VOX HUMANA

---

Chanting by the sunset,  
Singing in the dawn,  
Playing through the Heavens  
While the sails blow on,  
Dipping in the amethyst  
Effusions of the sky  
The temper of our instruments  
As close the shades go by;  
Striking from the gentled chords  
Every bewildering note  
That haunted all the happy sounds

That every Poet wrote,  
Watching the clouds caught in the strings  
Break into melody,  
And scatter through the atmosphere,  
And drop into the Sea;  
Floating the music up and down  
Where every ripple blows,  
We are the Singers of the air,  
And watch it where it goes.  
We see it tangle in the Stars  
And die into the night,  
And hear the laughter of the Souls  
Who passed it in delight,  
We see them stop, as, one by one,  
They turn, listening again,  
And hear, bearing our strings away,  
Their anxious sighs of pain:  
We sow the secret of our Songs  
Far out into the Sky,  
And eagerly the blossoms blow  
About the country high,  
And we, inclined upon the Winds,  
Chant in the scented air,  
And all the World is still to catch  
The hidden Singers there.

THE VANISHED SONG

---

Idly afloat on Seas of Rhyme,  
With sails in slumber on the air,  
And eyes that watch the careless time  
Beating monotonously there,  
Silent, alone on a lost Sea,  
Far from the Sun, afar from Shore,  
And far from Stars that dimly be  
Still far from where the Stars are more.

Forever lulled, forever heard  
The sounds that colors bring the Wave,  
Forever waiting, never word  
From me, for everything they gave,  
Doomed into silence, undismayed  
Indulgence from the helpless Seas  
To fathom, and to see betrayed  
Secrets to scatter when I please.  
Shall I return, and Music bring?  
Deceive the wandering Stars and steal  
Back while their lips enchanted ring,  
And in the Sun their Songs reveal?—  
When I go back, if in my eyes  
The Songs of Stars are hovering,  
They fall unspoken, and there lies  
Silence on me, although they sing.









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